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C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 000239

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SA, SA/INS, IO/T, NEA/IAI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2-11-13

TAGS: [PREL](#) [AORC](#) [EAID](#) [SNAR](#) [CE](#) [TH](#) [IR](#)

SUBJECT: Colombo Plan: Consensus emerging on
Thai candidate for secretary general slot

Ref: (A) Colombo-SA/INS 2/10/03 class e-mail

- (B) New Delhi 797
- (C) Colombo-SA/INS 1/24/03 fax
- (D) Bangkok 382
- (E) USMission New York 101 (All Notal)

(U) Classified by W. Lewis Amselem, Deputy Chief of
Mission. Reasons 1.5 (b, d)

1. (U) This is an Action Request -- Please see Para 4.

2. (C) Poloff attended a February 11 Colombo Plan meeting focused on selecting a new secretary general of the organization. (Note: The new secretary general, who will serve a four-year term, will take over in June from the current incumbent, an Indian.) During the course of the meeting, members decided that Kittipan Kanjanapipatkul, the candidate proposed by the Thai government, should be interviewed for the spot. (Note: Per Ref D, the Thai government has requested our support for its candidate. Kanjanapipatkul is a Thai government official, who has done significant work with the Colombo Plan in the past. His c.v. is included in Ref C.) Poloff did not join in this decision, pending Washington instructions. Members (again, other than the U.S.) agreed that the Iranian candidate, Nasrollah Kazemi Kamyab, should also be invited in for an interview. (Note: Mission just received Kamyab's c.v., which it is faxing to Washington. He has ambassador-ranking and represents Iran at ECOSOC at the UN.) Other than the Thai and the Iranian, none of the other candidates (from Bhutan, India, Mongolia, two from Pakistan, and Sri Lanka) was invited for interviews. (Note: Although Burma clearly indicated support for the Thai candidate, it also recommended reviewing the Bhutanese candidate -- also see Ref B. No one else spoke on behalf of Bhutan's candidate.)

3. (C) The Thai candidate seems to have by far the most support. Indeed, a consensus seems to be developing around his candidacy. It was not clear why the Iranian candidate was thrown in the mix, with only Malaysia and Australia recommending him (and both these members actually seem to support the Thai candidate). The next selection meeting is scheduled for March 6, with the Thai and Iranian nominees scheduled to attend and be interviewed by members. Based on what we understand, the Korean chair of the Colombo Plan may propose as early as that day that members vote for a candidate.

4. (C) ACTION REQUEST: Mission requests guidance on whether we should join the emerging consensus and support Thailand's nominee, Kittipan Kanjanapipatkul, as Secretary General of the Colombo Plan. Mission requests

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Washington's guidance before the Colombo Plan meeting on March 6, where members may well be asked to vote. Mission also requests whether it should participate in the planned interview of the Iranian candidate that day or sit it out. END ACTION REQUEST.

5. (U) Minimize considered.

WILLS